MARVEL COMIC

8
APR

2099 UNLIMITED

BUT THE PUBLIC ENEMY IS DEAD, SIR... DESTROYED BY AN ANGRY MOB...
...I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY THEY'VE REACTIVATED... THE WHITE DOG!
I'VE BEEN BROUGHT BACK BECAUSE HIS BODY WAS NEVER FOUND... AND RED DOGS REGENERATE...
IF THERE'S ONE LEFT, I'VE GOT TO FIND AND DESTROY HIM...!
THE PUBLIC MUST BE PROTECTED!

PUBLIC ENEMY NUMBER ONE

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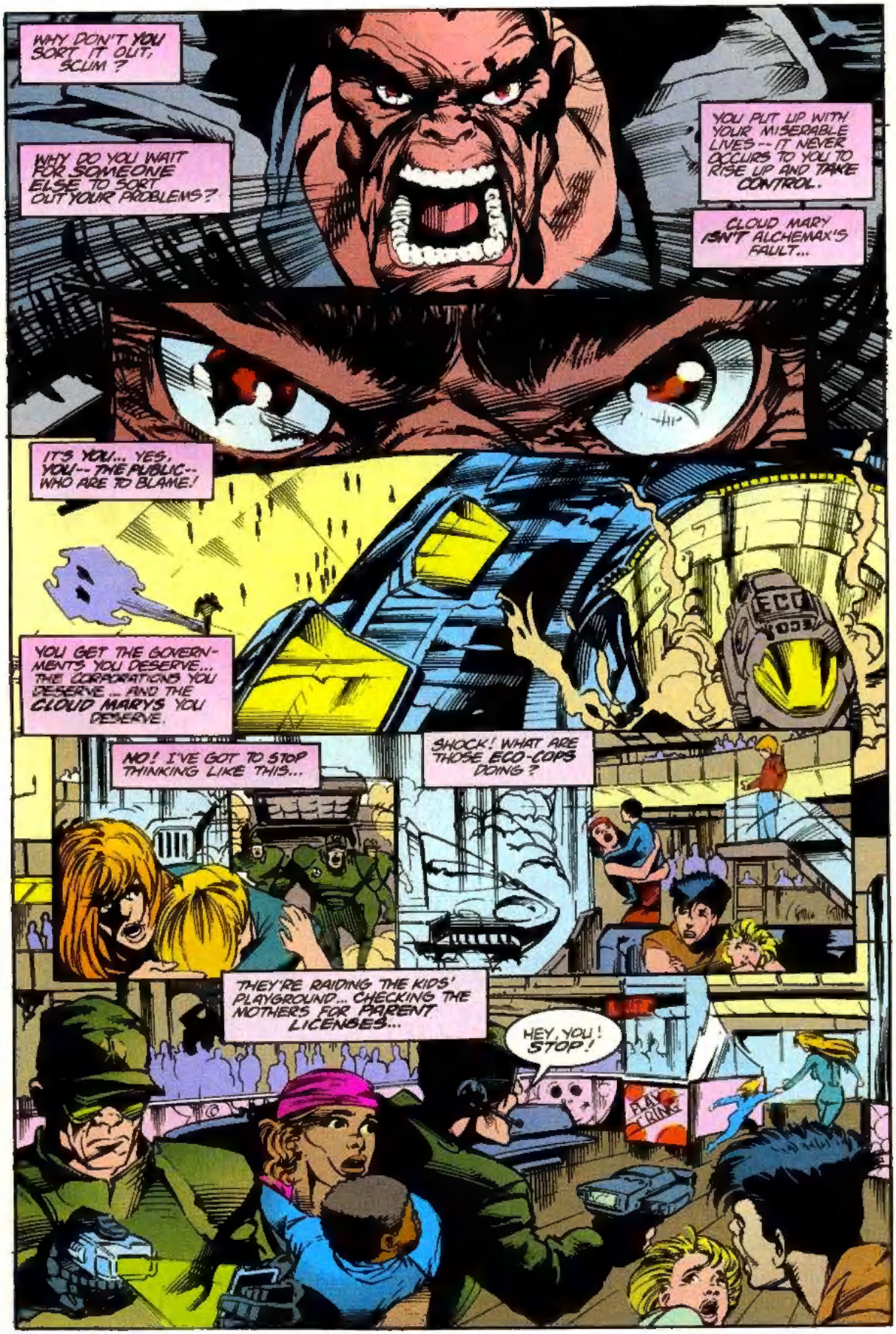
THE MOB LEFT ME A BLOODY PULP... THEY THOUGHT I WAS DEAD*...
BUT RED DOGS ARE ALMOST INDESTRUCTIBLE... MY TISSUE WAS DESIGNED TO REKNIT... REGROW...
BUT I PROVED MY POINT--THE PUBLIC FINALLY GOT UP AND DID SOMETHING.
MY WORK IS DONE.
IT'S OVER. I'M NO LONGER THE PUBLIC ENEMY.
I'VE GOT TO START A NEW LIFE NOW...
I HATE THE DAYS WHEN WE'VE GOT TO WEAR OUR PROTECTIVE SUITS.
STILL-- THAT'S MODERN LIFE FOR YOU THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO...
-CLOUD MARY PASSES OVER THIS TIME OF YEAR.
YOU'D THINK SOMEBODY WOULD DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS TOXIC RAIN.
YEAH-- WHY SHOULD ALCHEMAX BE ALLOWED TO GET AWAY WITH IT?
MAYBE SPIDEY OR THE PUNISHER OR THE BEASTMAN WILL TACKLE IT.


WHY DON'T YOU SORT IT OUT, SCUM ?
WHY DO YOU WAIT FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO SORT OUT YOUR PROBLEMS?
YOU PUT UP WITH YOUR MISERABLE LIVES -- IT NEVER OCCURS TO YOU TO RISE UP AND TAKE CONTROL.
CLOUD MARY ISN'T ALCHEMAX'S FAULT...
IT'S YOU... YES, YOU -- THE PUBLIC -- WHO ARE TO BLAME!
YOU GET THE GOVERNMENTS YOU DESERVE... THE CORPORATIONS YOU DESERVE ... AND THE CLOUD MARYS YOU DESERVE.
ECO
NO! I'VE GOT TO STOP THINKING LIKE THIS...
SHOCK! WHAT ARE THOSE ECO-COPS DOING ?
THEY'RE RAIDING THE KIDS' PLAYGROUND... CHECKING THE MOTHERS FOR PARENT LICENSES...
HEY, YOU! STOP!

I WARNED YOU!
AAAAGH
OH YEAH? THAT MIGHT BE A LITTLE DIFFICULT...
...BECAUSE ACCORDING TO THIS BIO-SCAN YOU ARE SONIA BRISSINGER, MARRIED, BUT APPLICATION FOR PARENTHOOD TURNED DOWN TWICE.
PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE TO EXPLAIN THIS LITTLE GIRL...
I...I WAS ONLY RUNNING TO GET MY LICENSE FROM THE CAR, OFFICER.
BABY-SITTING, ARE YOU? NIECE, IS SHE?
DON'T CRY, MOMMY. DON'T CRY.
NO! DON'T TAKE HER AWAY! SHE'S MY BABY!

WHAT MAKES YOU THINK YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BEAR CHILDREN WITHOUT PASSING YOUR PARENTHOOD TESTS?
I HAVE NATURE'S RIGHT AS A WOMAN.
SICK. THIS ISN'T THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, LADY. YOU'RE BOOKED.
ISN'T THAT A SHAME? THE POOR WOMAN. I THOUGHT LEGALLY THEY COULDN'T DO THAT.
YES. SHE'S MEANT TO HAVE RIGHT OF APPEAL FIRST.
STILL, THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO.
YEAH... IT'S NONE OF OUR BUSINESS...
...BEST TO KEEP OUT OF IT.
YOU SHEEP! IT IS YOUR BUSINESS.
IF YOU'D ALL SPOKEN UP, SHE'D HAVE HAD A CHANCE.
IF AUTHORITY IS A BULLY AND YOU STAND UP TO THEM, THEY'LL BACK DOWN.
IT'S YOUR FAULT THAT MOTHER WAS SEPARATED FROM HER CHILD...

JUST AS I WAS... WHEN I WAS A KID...
...NO ONE WOULD HELP THEM.
WHEN ECO-COPS BURST INTO MY PARENTS' APARTMENT AND DRAGGED THEM OUT...
...I FIND THE PUBLIC GUILTY OF BEING COWARDLY SHEEP, AND I HEREBY SENTENCE THEM TO...
...NO, NO, I MUSTN'T...!
PUT THE GUN AWAY, SABER.
IT'S OVER. I'VE PUT ALL THAT BEHIND ME NOW.
GOT TO LEARN NOT TO INTERFERE, LIKE THE GUTLESS PUBLIC.

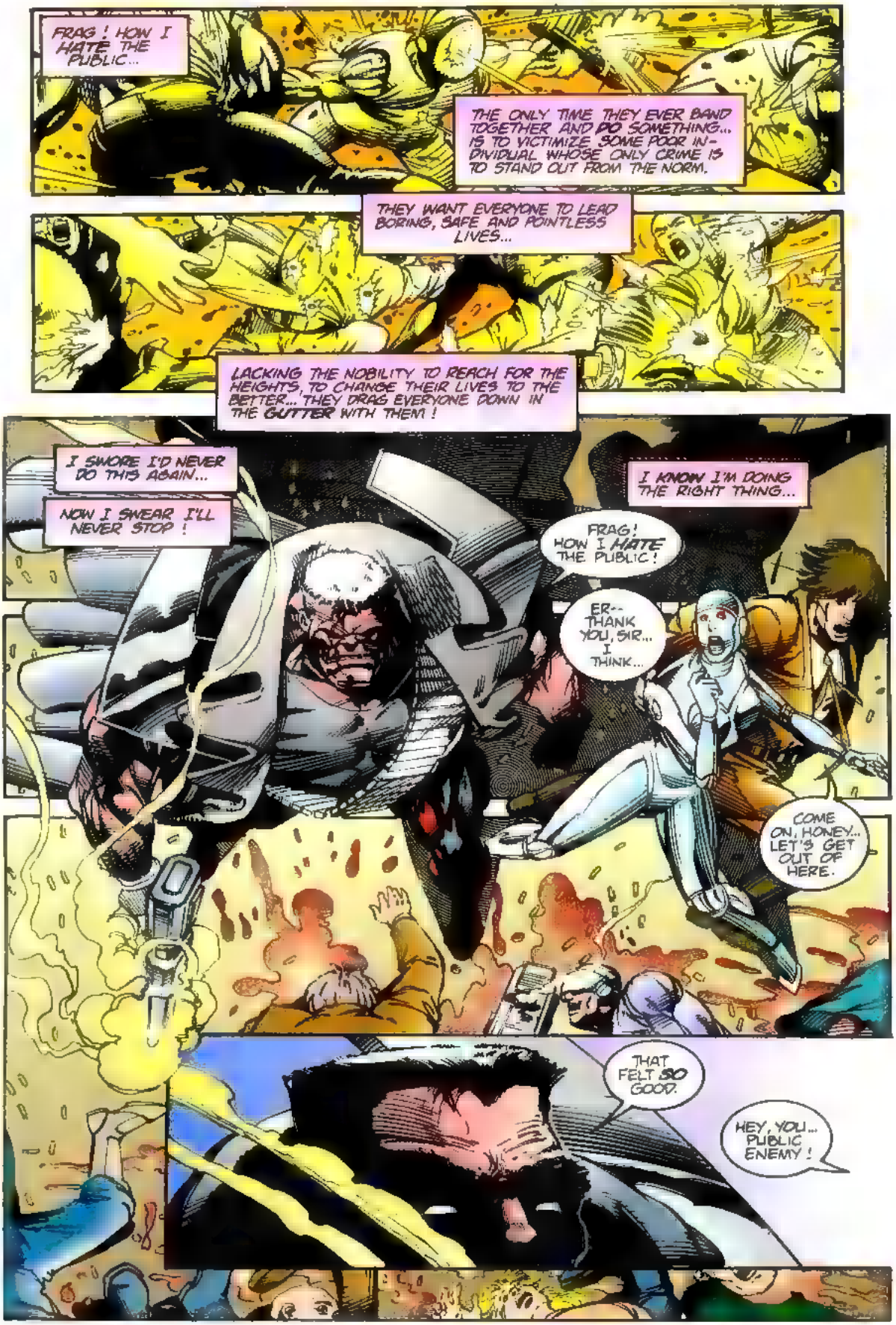
HE WON'T BE ABLE TO STOP HIMSELF...SOONER OR LATER, THAT RED DOG, THE PUBLIC ENEMY, WILL ATTACK..
..AND I'LL BE READY.
I'LL DESTROY HIM THE WAY I DESTROYED THOSE RED DOG VETS AFTER THE WAR...
SIR, WOULD IT BE OKAY TO ASK YOU HOW MANY RED DOGS YOU HAVE KILLED?
ALL OF THEM.
IT'S WHAT I WAS DESIGNED AND BRED FOR...
MY DESIGNERS LOOKED AT HISTORY AND SAW WHAT A PROBLEM VETS RETURNING FROM THE WAR COULD BE...
NO WAY SUCH GENETIC FREAKS COULD BE ASSIMILATED INTO SOCIETY..
"THERE WAS ONLY ONE SOLUTION."

HONEY, LOOK -- THEY'RE STARING I WISH YOU'D RECONSIDER WEARING YOUR SYNTHI-SKIN IN PUBLIC.
NO.
DO I WEAR SKIN IN OUR APARTMENT, DARLING?
STAND CLEAR MEG-LEV REPAIR
AND WHY'S THAT?
YOU KNOW WHY, SWEETHEART... BECAUSE I'M PROUD OF YOUR FINE METALLIC CHASSIS.
'CHINE LOVER.
MUMBLE! MUMBLE!
DISGUSTING!
LET THEM STARE. WHEN I BECAME SENTIENT I AUTOMATICALLY RECEIVED FULL LEGAL RIGHTS OF CITIZENSHIP...
IT'S YOU I MARRIED... IF YOU LIKE ME THIS WAY, I DON'T CARE WHAT ANYONE ELSE THINKS.
ANYWAY... WHAT CAN THEY DO? STARES CAN'T HURT ME.
MH-8
BONG

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE, 'CHINE?
GIVING YOURSELF AIRS AND GRACES!
STOP THAT. THIS SENSORY INPUT IS ANALOGOUS TO PAIN TO ME.
YOU THINK YOU'RE SO BLASTED CLEVER!
YOU'VE GOT A NERVE - SHOULD HAVE WORN YOUR SKIN, 'CHINE... THEN WE WOULDN'T HAVE NOTICED...
WE-- WE'VE DONE NOTHING AGAINST ANY OF YOU...
PLEASE, LEAVE HER BE, I--UUUGH!
M·L·2
WE'LL DEAL WITH YOU LATER, SICKO... WHEN WE'VE DONE WITH DIS-MANTLING YOUR PET DISHWASHER.
LASER
M·L·29
PLEASE... ALTHOUGH MUCH STRONGER THAN YOU, I HAVE A PROGRAMMED INJUNCTION AGAINST HARMING HUMAN BEINGS.
AIN'T THAT A FACT... DO YOU HAVE A PROGRAM AGAINST SCREAMING TOO...?

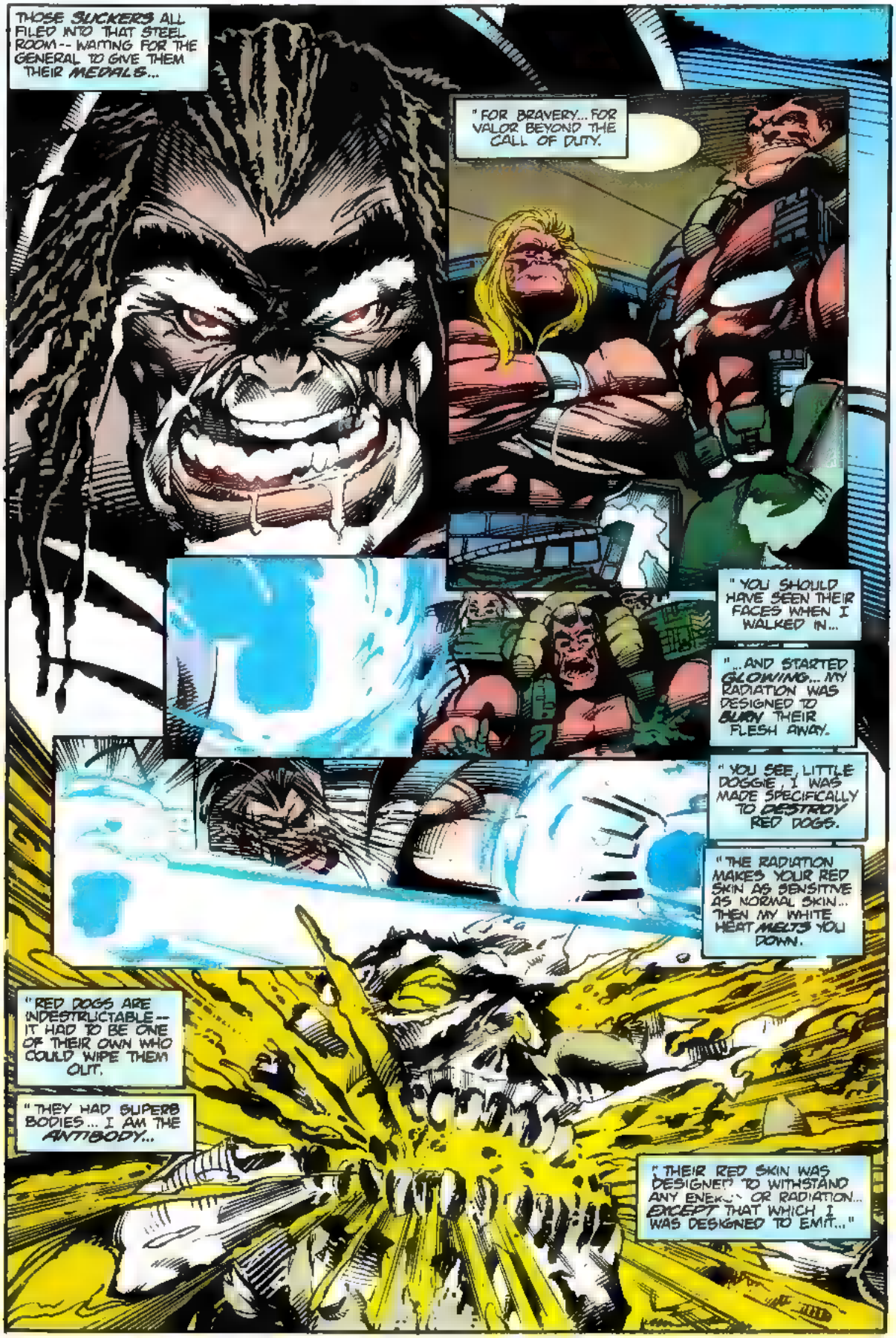
NO!
SO YOU WANT SOME, TOO, 'CHINE LOVER? COMIN' RIGHT UP!
YEAH! BARBECUE THE BOZO!
SSB-ZZAP!
GONNA BURN YOU FIRST!
NO, YOU'RE NOT!
SHOCK! IT'S NOT EVEN MARKING HIM!
FLAME HAS NO EFFECT ON A RED DOG!
LET'S SEE WHAT EFFECT I HAVE ON YOU...!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING...? WHO...WHO THE *%$# ARE YOU...!?
I AM...

THE PUBLIC ENEMY!

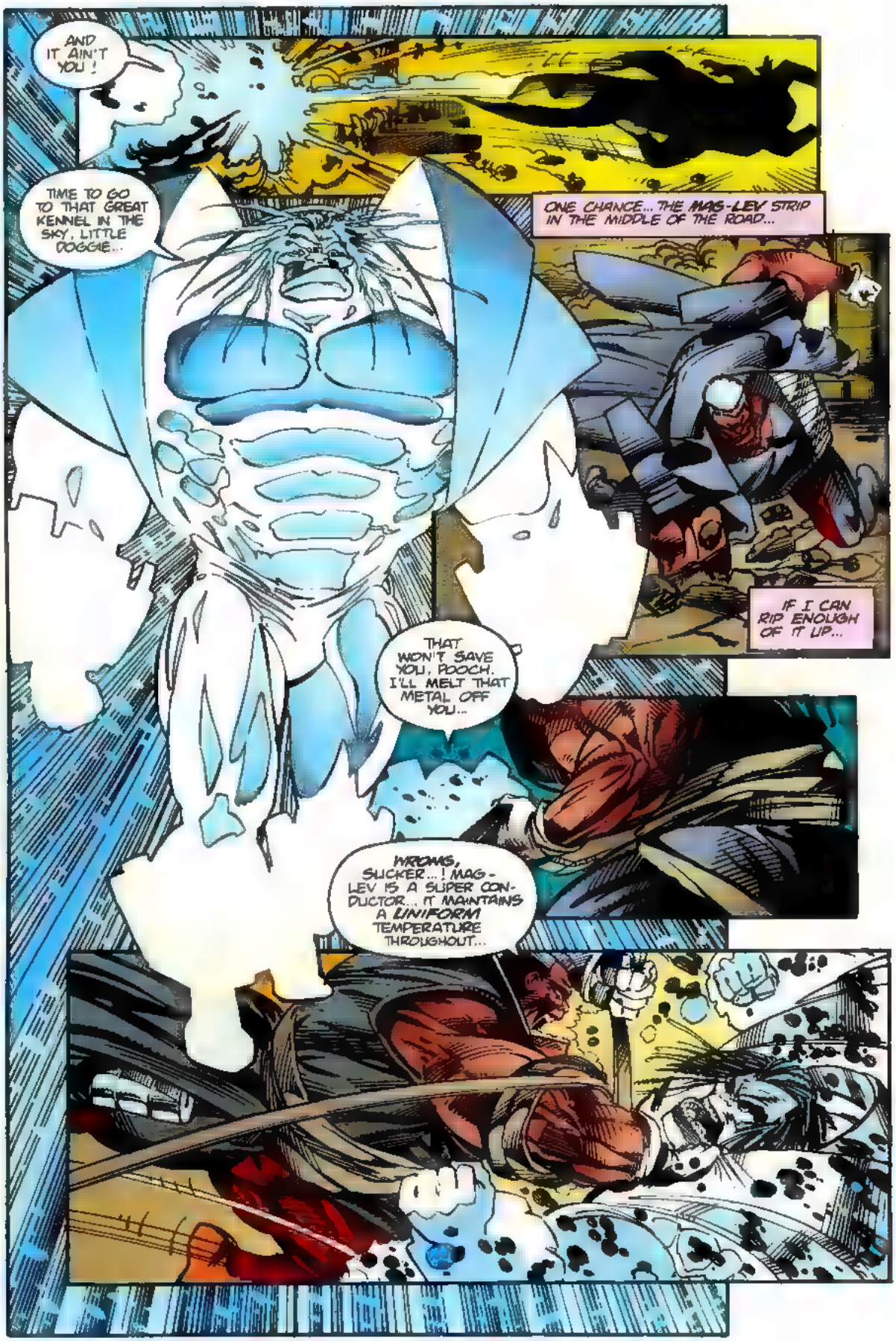

FRAG! HOW I HATE THE PUBLIC...
THE ONLY TIME THEY EVER BAND TOGETHER AND DO SOMETHING... IS TO VICTIMIZE SOME POOR INDIVIDUAL WHOSE ONLY CRIME IS TO STAND OUT FROM THE NORM.
THEY WANT EVERYONE TO LEAD BORING, SAFE AND POINTLESS LIVES...
LACKING THE NOBILITY TO REACH FOR THE HEIGHTS, TO CHANGE THEIR LIVES TO THE BETTER... THEY DRAG EVERYONE DOWN IN THE GUTTER WITH THEM!
I SWORE I'D NEVER DO THIS AGAIN...
NOW I SWEAR I'LL NEVER STOP!
I KNOW I'M DOING THE RIGHT THING...
FRAG! HOW I HATE THE PUBLIC!
ER-- THANK YOU, SIR... I THINK...
COME ON, HONEY... LET'S GET OUT OF HERE.
THAT FELT SO GOOD.
HEY, YOU... PUBLIC ENEMY!

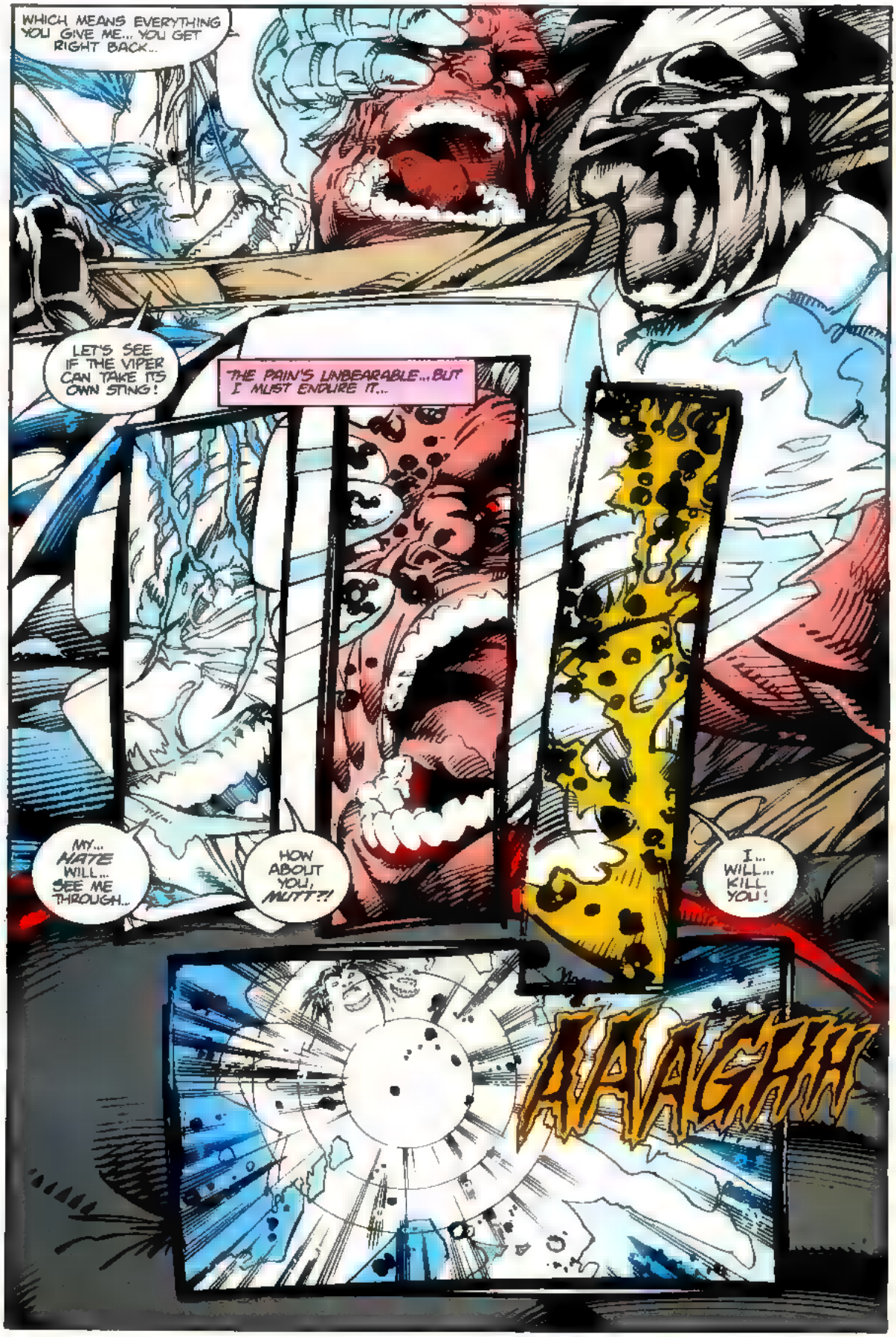
WHO THE SHOCK ARE YOU?
I AM WHITE DOG...
...THE PUBLIC DEFENDER!
MY JOB IS TO SAFEGUARD THE INNOCENT POPULATION FROM HOMICIDAL MANIACS LIKE YOU!
HOMICIDAL MAYBE...
...BUT I RESENT BEING CALLED ■ MANIAC!
THERE'S METHOD TO MY MADNESS!
PTANG
PTANG
PEW!
BULLETS BOUNCE OFF. SURPRISED? YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT ME, DO YOU, SON?
YOU WERE NEVER IN THE WAR-- WHERE I WAS DESIGNED TO KILL YOUR KIND.
WHERE DO YOU THINK ALL THE OTHER RED DOGS ARE?

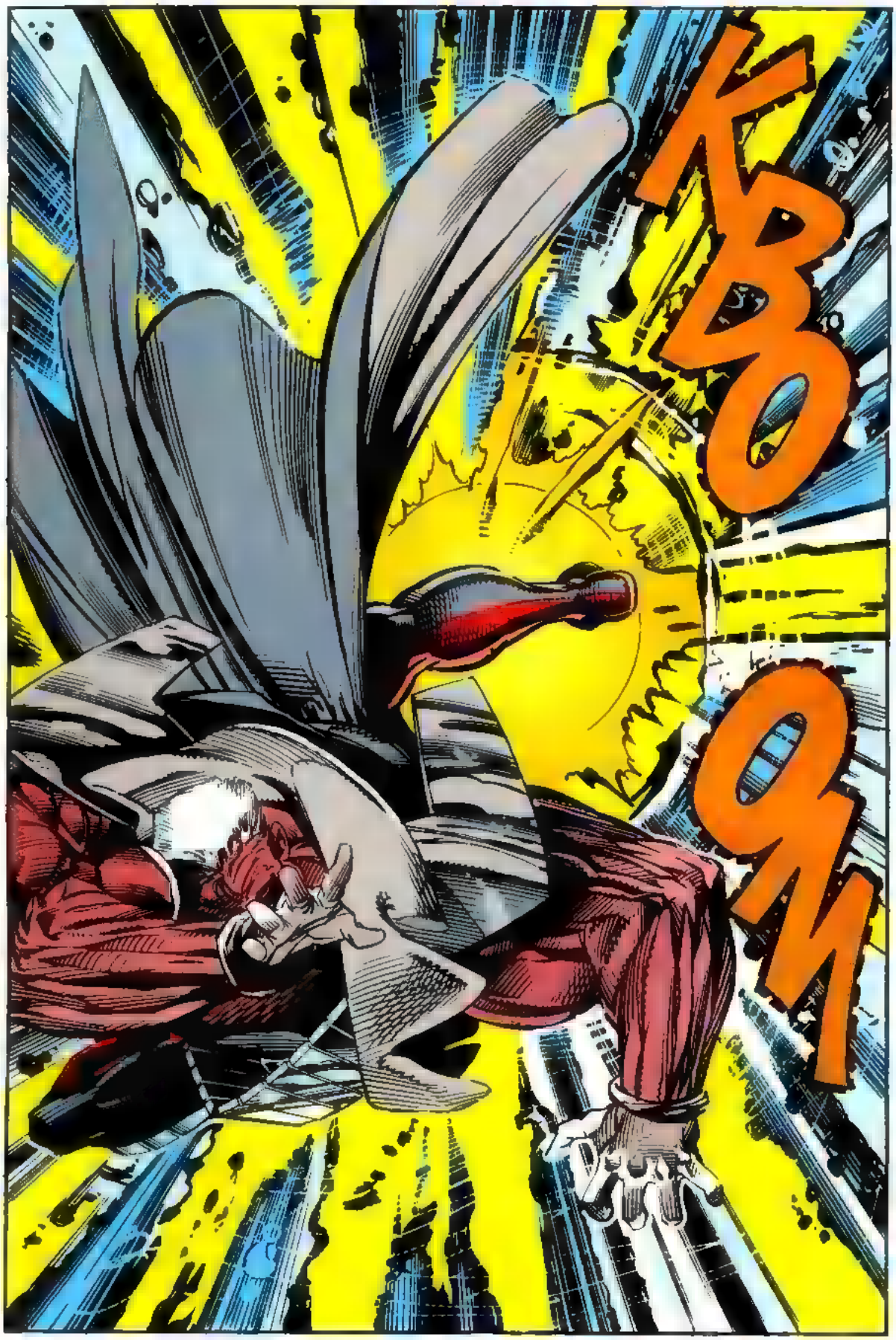
I KILLED THE SCIENTISTS INVOLVED WITH THE RED DOG PROJECT...
THEY EXPERIMENTED ON MY MOM AND DAD... REDUCING THEM TO BIO-SAMPLES...
SO THEY COULD DISCOVER HOW THEY GAVE BIRTH TO ME... THE LAST OF THE RED DOGS!
BUT NO ONE TOLD ME HOW THE RED DOG PLATOON DIED!
I TAKE IT YOU'RE ONE OF THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR DEATHS?
NOPE...
... I'M THE ONE RESPONSIBLE!


THOSE SUCKERS ALL FILED INTO THAT STEEL ROOM -- WAITING FOR THE GENERAL TO GIVE THEM THEIR MEDALS...
"FOR BRAVERY... FOR VALOR BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY.
"YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN THEIR FACES WHEN I WALKED IN...
"...AND STARTED GLOWING... MY RADIATION WAS DESIGNED TO BURN THEIR FLESH AWAY.
"YOU SEE, LITTLE DOGGIE, I WAS MADE SPECIFICALLY TO DESTROY RED DOGS.
"THE RADIATION MAKES YOUR RED SKIN AS SENSITIVE AS NORMAL SKIN... THEN MY WHITE HEAT MELTS YOU DOWN.
"RED DOGS ARE INDESTRUCTABLE -- IT HAD TO BE ONE OF THEIR OWN WHO COULD WIPE THEM OUT.
"THEY HAD SUPERB BODIES... I AM THE ANTIBODY...
"THEIR RED SKIN WAS DESIGNED TO WITHSTAND ANY ENEMY OR RADIATION... EXCEPT THAT WHICH I WAS DESIGNED TO EMIT..."

AND YOU CALL ME A HOMICIDAL MANIAC!
YOU'RE A COLD-BLOODED TRAITOR TO YOUR OWN KIND!
THAT'S RIGHT, POOCH, BUT I'M AS FAST AS YOU...
AS STRONG AS YOU...!
KRAK
AS TOUGH AS YOU...!
...BUT ONLY ONE OF US CAN MELT THE OTHER WITH WHITE HEAT...!


AND IT AIN'T YOU!
TIME TO GO TO THAT GREAT KENNEL IN THE SKY, LITTLE DOGGIE...
ONE CHANCE... THE MAG-LEV STRIP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD...
IF I CAN RIP ENOUGH OF IT UP...
THAT WON'T SAVE YOU, POOCH. I'LL MELT THAT METAL OFF YOU...
HYROMS, SUCKER...! MAG-LEV IS A SUPER CONDUCTOR... IT MAINTAINS A UNIFORM TEMPERATURE THROUGHOUT...


WHICH MEANS EVERYTHING YOU GIVE ME... YOU GET RIGHT BACK..
LET'S SEE IF THE VIPER CAN TAKE ITS OWN STING!
THE PAIN'S UNBEARABLE...BUT I MUST ENDURE IT...
MY... HATE WILL... SEE ME THROUGH..
HOW ABOUT YOU, MUTT?!
I... WILL... KILL YOU!
AAAGHH


KBOOM

I AM STRONGER... MOM AND DAD'S GENES MAKE ME DIFFERENT FROM THE RED DOGS OF OLD... I'M
WHOA! WAY TO GO, DUDE!
PUBLIC ENEMY! YOU'RE THE MOST!
WHAT THE...?
AT LAST... A REAL MAN IN THIS CITY...
JUST LOOK AT HIM! HE'S THE KIND OF HERO I WANT ON MY BEDROOM WALL...!
YOU REALLY SHOWED WHITE DOG, MR. ENEMY.
YOU GHOULS...! TYPICAL PUBLIC...! GATHERING LIKE ONLOOKERS AT A VEHICLE ACCIDENT... OR ANTS ON A POP-SICLE STICK!
YOU'RE RIGHT... DISGUSTING, AREN'T THEY...? LOOK-- THIS ISN'T FOR ME... IT'S FOR MY KID BROTHER--HE'S A REAL FAN BOY..
BOY, I WISH I COULD HIT HARD LIKE YOU.
WELL, YOU CAN'T... BUT I TELL YOU WHAT...
...YOU CAN BE HIT HARD BY ME!

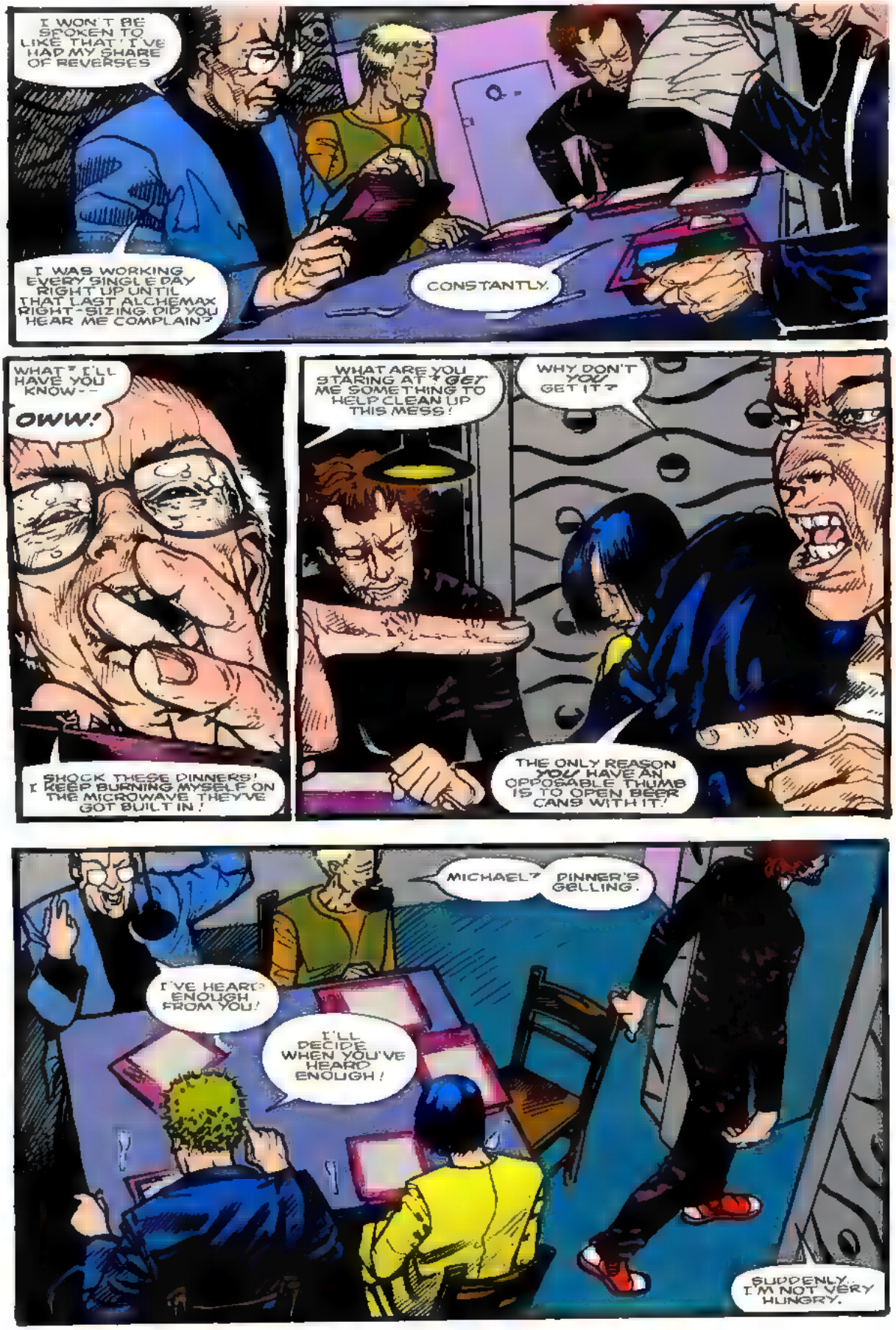
COOL! WHAT A PUNCH!
ARE YOU GOING TO KILL ANYBODY ELSE TODAY?
PUBLIC ENEMY
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS... YOU'RE ALL WORSE THAN I THOUGHT...!
LET ME SPELL IT OUT FOR YOU...
I HATE ALL OF YOU...!
FOR YOUR STUPIDITY... YOUR COWARDICE... YOUR VOYEURISM...!
YOU ARE TO BLAME FOR THE CRUD STATE THIS CITY'S IN!
THIS IS NO FANTASY HOLO-FILM... OR TOTAL REALITY GAME...
AND I'M NO COMIC BOOK BADDIE...
I'M FOR REAL...
...AND I'M YOUR ENEMY
THAT'S RIGHT, PUNK... YOUR ENEMY.
IT'S PERSONAL.

I'M THE PUBLIC ENEMY AND I'M COMING AFTER...
YOU!

GREAT TO BE BACK HOME... EVEN IF IT IS OWNED LOCK, STOCK AND BARREL BY ALCHEMAX!
I COULD USE A MEAL. I'VE STOPPED FOR A SNACK... BUT WHO CAN EAT THROUGH A MASK LIKE THIS?
AH, LYLA! WOULD YOU BE KIND ENOUGH TO FIX ME DINNER?
SPIDER-MAN
BEHIND THE EIGHT BALL
TERRY KAVANAGH WRITER
MAX DOUGLAS ARTIST
JANICE CHIANG LETTERER
ED LAZELLARI COLORIST
JOEY CAVALIERI EDITOR
BOBBIE CHASE BOSS
DINNER PROGRAM ENGAGED AND RUNNING, MIGUEL!

HEY, WATCH IT WITH THE "MIGUEL" STUFF...
...WHICH REMINDS ME...
SPLORTCH
ONCE I TAKE OUT THAT MISERABLE SURVEILLANCE CAMERA...
...I CAN SAFELY ENTER CASA MIGUELITO UNDETECTED.
I'VE BEEN MEANING TO GET HER A REAL NICE GIFT TO THANK HER FOR THAT, TOO.
THERE'S THIS AUCTION OF TWEN-CEN ARTIFACTS. SHE REALLY GOES FOR THAT..
WHERE'D I LEAVE THE CATALOG?
AH! IS THAT PEPPERED SALMON I SMELL? AND.. AND..
NEW POTATOES AU GRATIN. YOUR FAVORITE, MIGUEL.
LYLA, IF YOU WERE REAL, I'D MARRY YOU.
WHAT DID I DO WITHOUT YOU?
RUN THE DINNER PROGRAM BY REMOTE CONTROL.
THANKS FOR GETTING THE ROBOT DRONE TO REPLACE THE WINDOW, TOO. I COULDN'T BE GLADDER THAT XINA BROUGHT YOU BACK ON-LINE!*
*SPIDEY 2099 #25. -- JOEY

LOOK AT THIS. AN AUCTION CATALOG. THEY CALL IT.
A DISGRACE IS WHAT IT IS.
HOW CAN RICH PEOPLE WASTE THEIR MONEY ON SUCH TRIVIA WHEN MORE DESERVING PEOPLE NEED SO MUCH?
HONEY DINNER
LOOK AT THIS STUFF. EVEN TWEN-CEN PEOPLE HAD THE BRAINS TO THROW THIS STUFF AWAY. I MEAN, WHY DID THEY EVER MANUFACTURE BEATLE WIGS?
TO KEEP THEIR BEETLES WARM?
DEAR, IT'S NO USE WORRYING ABOUT WHAT OTHER PEOPLE SPEND THEIR HARD-EARNED MONEY ON
"HARD-EARNED." THAT'S JUST IT, ISN'T IT?
IF YOUR NO-ACCOUNT BROTHER WOULD GET HIMSELF A JOB... MAYBE WE WOULD HAVE MORE TO EAT AROUND HERE THAN MICROWAVE DINNERS.
I DON'T SEE YOU GETTING OFF YOUR FAT CAN TO DO MORE THAN CHECK THE SCORES AND CALL YOUR BOOKIE.

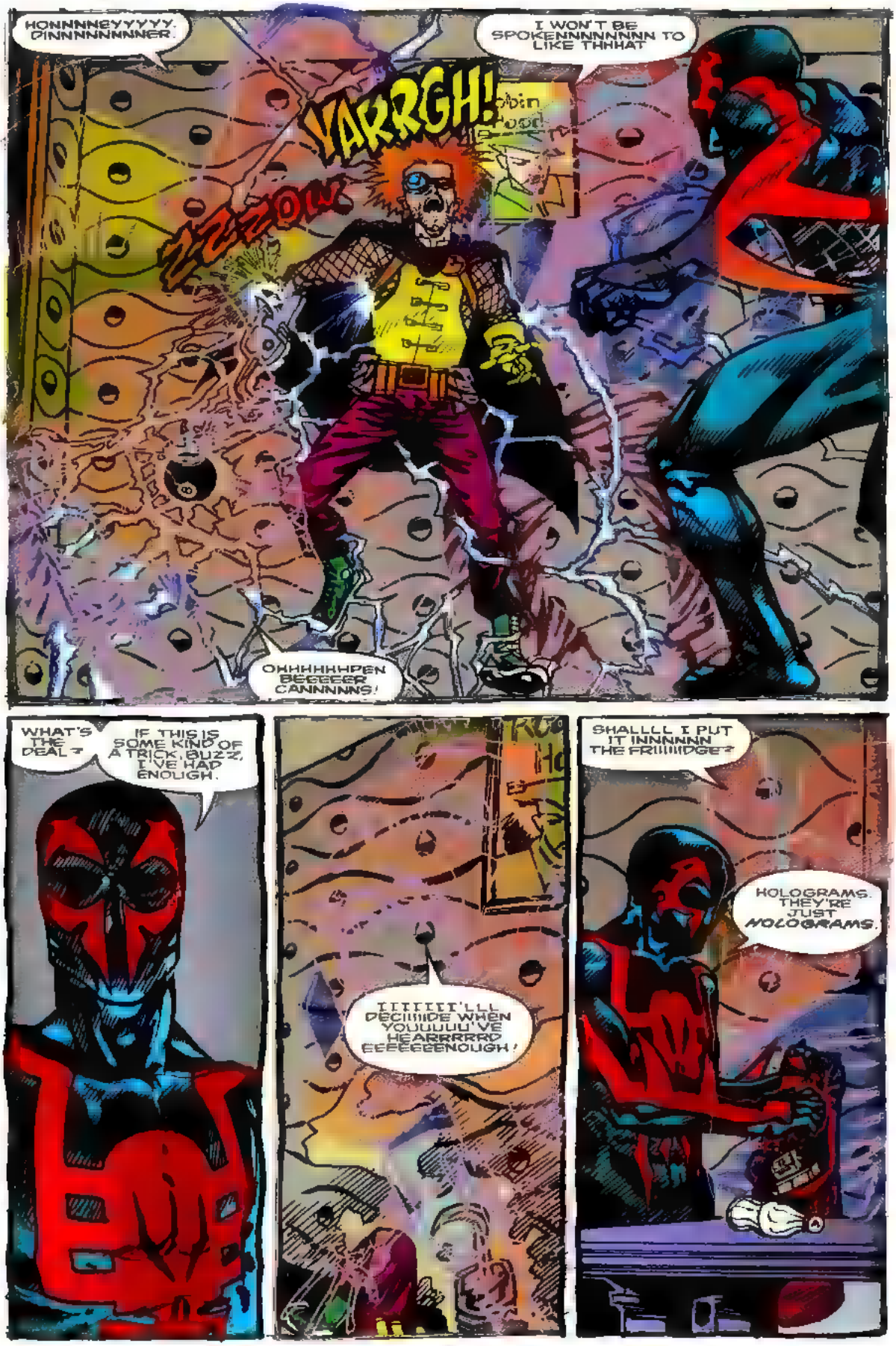

I WON'T BE SPOKEN TO LIKE THAT. I'VE HAD MY SHARE OF REVERSES
I WAS WORKING EVERY SINGLE DAY RIGHT UP UNTIL THAT LAST ALCHEMAX RIGHT-SIZING. DID YOU HEAR ME COMPLAIN?
CONSTANTLY.
WHAT? I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW--
OWW!
SHOCK THESE DINNERS! I KEEP BURNING MYSELF ON THE MICROWAVE THEY'VE GOT BUILT IN!
WHAT ARE YOU STARING AT? GET ME SOMETHING TO HELP CLEAN UP THIS MESS!
WHY DON'T YOU GET IT?
THE ONLY REASON YOU HAVE AN OPPOSABLE THUMB IS TO OPEN BEER CANS WITH IT.
MICHAEL? DINNER'S GELLING.
I'VE HEARD ENOUGH FROM YOU!
I'LL DECIDE WHEN YOU'VE HEARD ENOUGH!
SUDDENLY, I'M NOT VERY HUNGRY.

IT'S A SHAME TO WASTE IT
SHALL I PUT IT IN THE FRIDGE? YOU'LL WANT IT LATER.
NO, MOM
WITH ANY LUCK. .
. . AND THIS OUTFIT I'VE ENGINEERED. . .
. . . I'LL SOON HAVE EARNED US ENOUGH. . . .
. . . SO WE CAN THROW AWAY THAT PRE-FAB STUFF. AND BUY US SOME REAL FOOD.
ZZZZ-ZZZZ!
FROM NOW ON. . . I'M THE DATA PIRATE.
THE RICH WHO KEEP US IN THIS DOWNTRODDEN STATE WILL STAND AND DELIVER.
FAREWELL, MOTHER.
I MUST BE GOING.

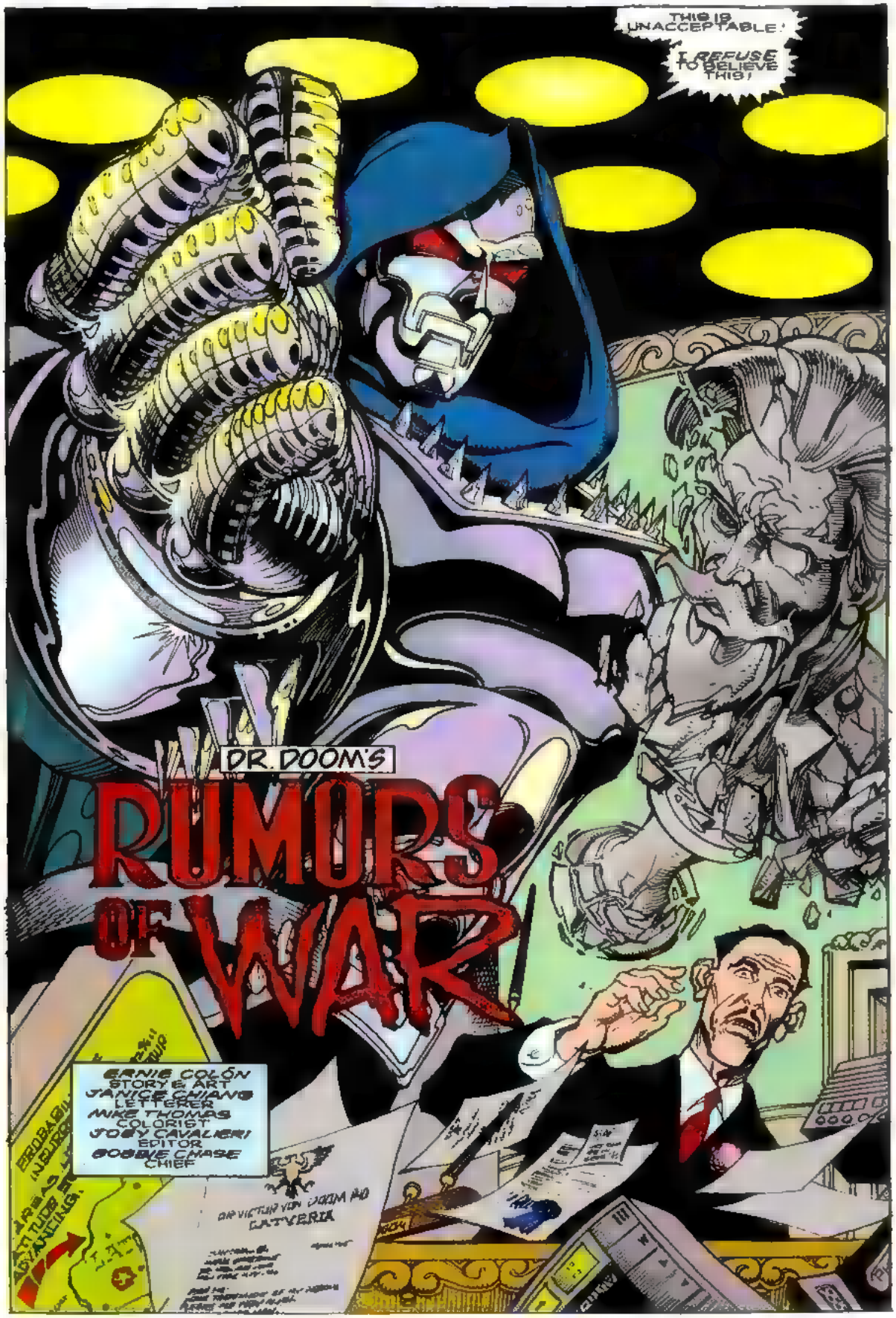
ONCE... GOING TWICE
SOLD!
TO THE GENTLEMAN FROM ALCHEMAX!
THE LOT INCLUDES A MAGIC EIGHTBALL, A SOUVENIR SNOW-GLOBE, A COMIC BOOK, A SODA POP BOTTLE AND A TOY ROBOT.
HOPE XINA APPRECIATES THIS STUFF!
EVEN ON MY SALARY, THE STUFF'S PRETTY PROHIBITIVE!
HEY! MY JUNK! I MEAN, XINA'S JUNK! I MEAN.
SECURITY!
SECURITY IS EXACTLY WHAT I'M AFTER FOR MYSELF AND MY FAMILY!
SO DON'T MIND IF THESE WARES FALL INTO THE HANDS OF SOMEONE MORE... NEEDY.
YOU CAN KEEP THE WATER-FILLED THING, BUT FOR THE REST...
...THEY BECOME THIS BUCCANEER'S BOOTY!

BROTHER! NO TELLING WHAT ELSE THIS SNOID WILL MAKE OFF WITH, GIVEN A CHANCE!
SO, I'VE GOTTA MAKE SURE HE DOESN'T GET A CHANCE!
I'LL JUST DISABLE THIS SURVEILLANCE CAMERA, SO NO ONE KNOWS HOW I GOT ON THE SCENE AND...
SPIDER-MAN!
SO...YOU'VE BECOME A TOOL OF THE RICH... PROTECTOR OF THEIR PROPERTY!
ZZZZRAKK!
FRANKLY, SPUD... I'M HERE TO PROTECT MY PROPERTY...
KCHOWW!
...AND THAT SHOT CAME A BIT TOO CLOSE TO IT FOR COMFORT!
KARSHH!
TELL YOUR MASTERS YOU MET THE DATA PIRATE THIS DAY..
...AND FAILED TO BEST HIM ON THE BATTLEFIELD!
TELL WHO?

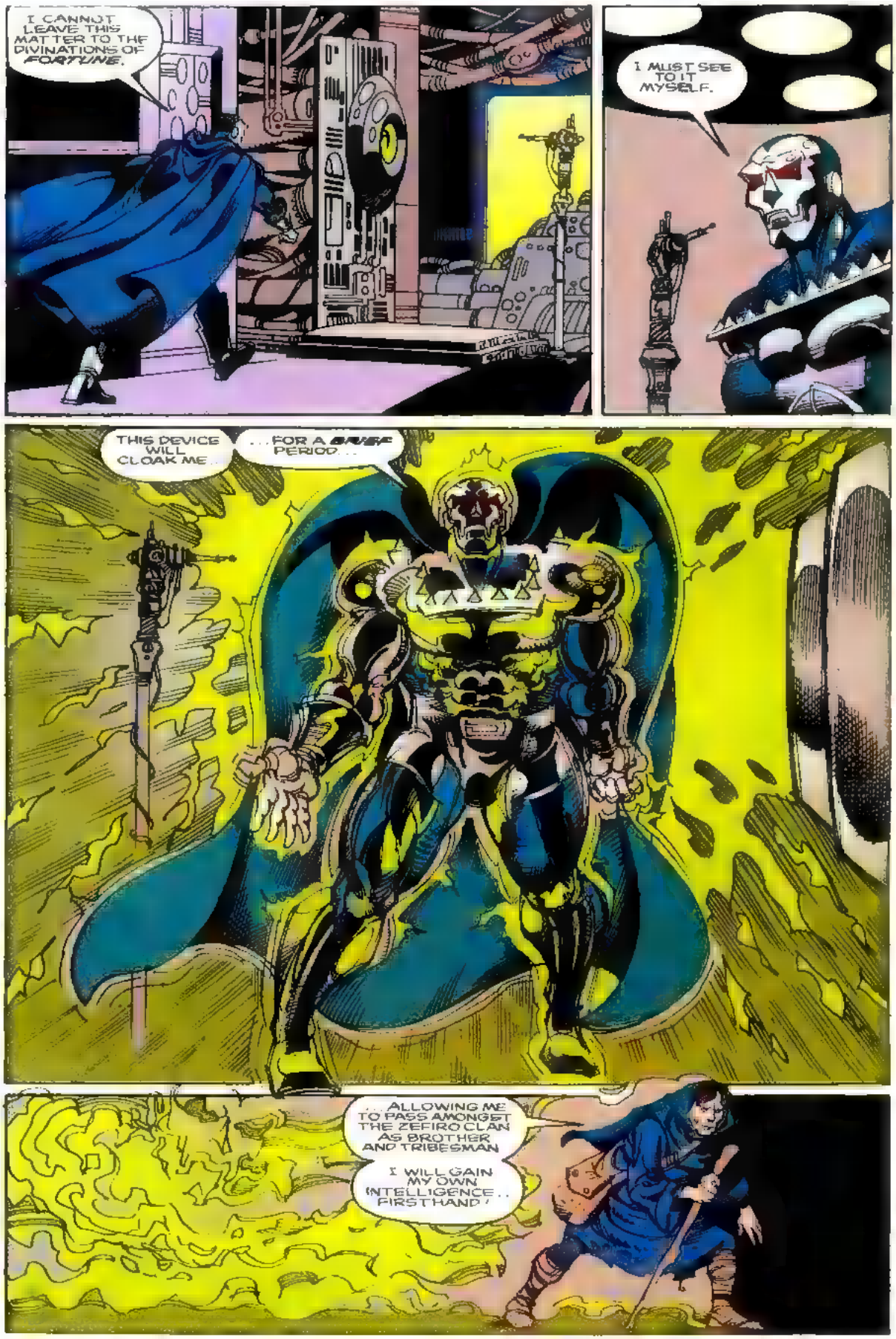
YOU GOTTA LOVE THIS GUY. LEAVES A TRAIL LIKE A COMET
THEN, IS HE HEADED FOR THE SPANISH MAIN? DAVY JONES'S LOCKER? SHERWOOD FOREST?
"NAAAAAH."
BACK SO SOON?
YOU HAVEN'T REALLY...TAKEN ANYTHING...HAVE YOU?
THE NEWS
AS A WISE SAGE OF THE HEROIC AGE ONCE SAID...
"WHAT'S UP, DOC?"
TAKEN? MERELY REAPPROPRIATED THE WEALTH.
THAT'S...WEALTH?
DON'T LOOK NOW, BUT SOMEONE THINKS IT'S WORTH ENOUGH TO WANT IT BACK.
YOU!
YOU WON'T TAKE THESE TREASURES!
ZZZOW!
GUESS AGAIN, CHESTER.
I NOTICED YOU TOOK EVERYTHING BUT THE SNOW-GLIDE, ON ACCOUNT IT WAS FILLED WITH WATER
KAKKOW!
YOU DIDN'T WANT TO RUN THE RISK...I GUESS BECAUSE YOUR POWERS MUST BE ELECTRICAL IN NATURE.
BUT SINCE YOU HADN'T SEEN ONE OF THESE BEFORE--
--YOU DIDN'T KNOW-
--THEY'RE FILLED WITH WATER, TOO!
MADE IN JAPAN
PREPARE TO SHORT OUT, SPARKY!

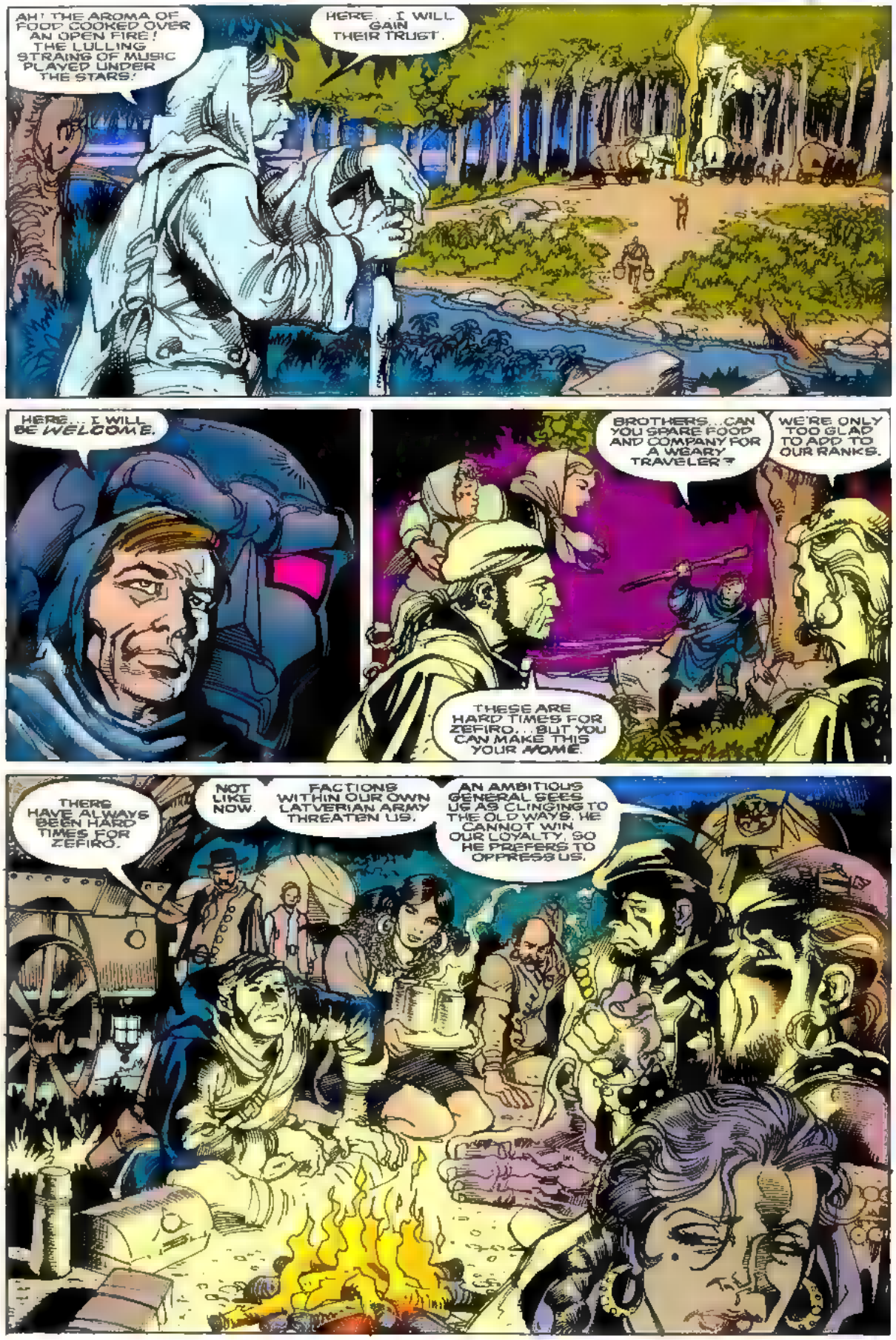

HONNNNEYYYYY. DINNNNNNNNNER.
I WON'T BE SPOKENNNNNNNN TO LIKE THHHAT
YARRGH!
ZZZOM
OKHHHHHHPEN BEEEEER CANNNNS!
WHAT'S THE DEAL?
IF THIS IS SOME KIND OF A TRICK, BUZZ, I'VE HAD ENOUGH.
IIIIIIII'LLL DECIIIIDE WHEN YOUUUUU'VE HEARRRRRD EEEEEEENOUGH!
SHALLLL I PUT IT INNNNNNN THE FRIIIIIDGE?
HOLOGRAMS. THEY'RE JUST HOLOGRAMS.

A WHOLE FAMILY OF 'EM?
PATHETIC. MAYBE HE LOST HIS REAL FAMILY, MAYBE HE NEVER HAD ONE.
I'VE GOT A HOLO IN MY APARTMENT, TOO...
"I HOPE I NEVER GROW ATTACHED TO LYLA... THE WAY HE HAS TO THEM.
"THERE MUST BE A MORE REWARDING WAY...
HONNNNNEY. DINNNNER.
Robin Hood
"... TO GET A LIFE."

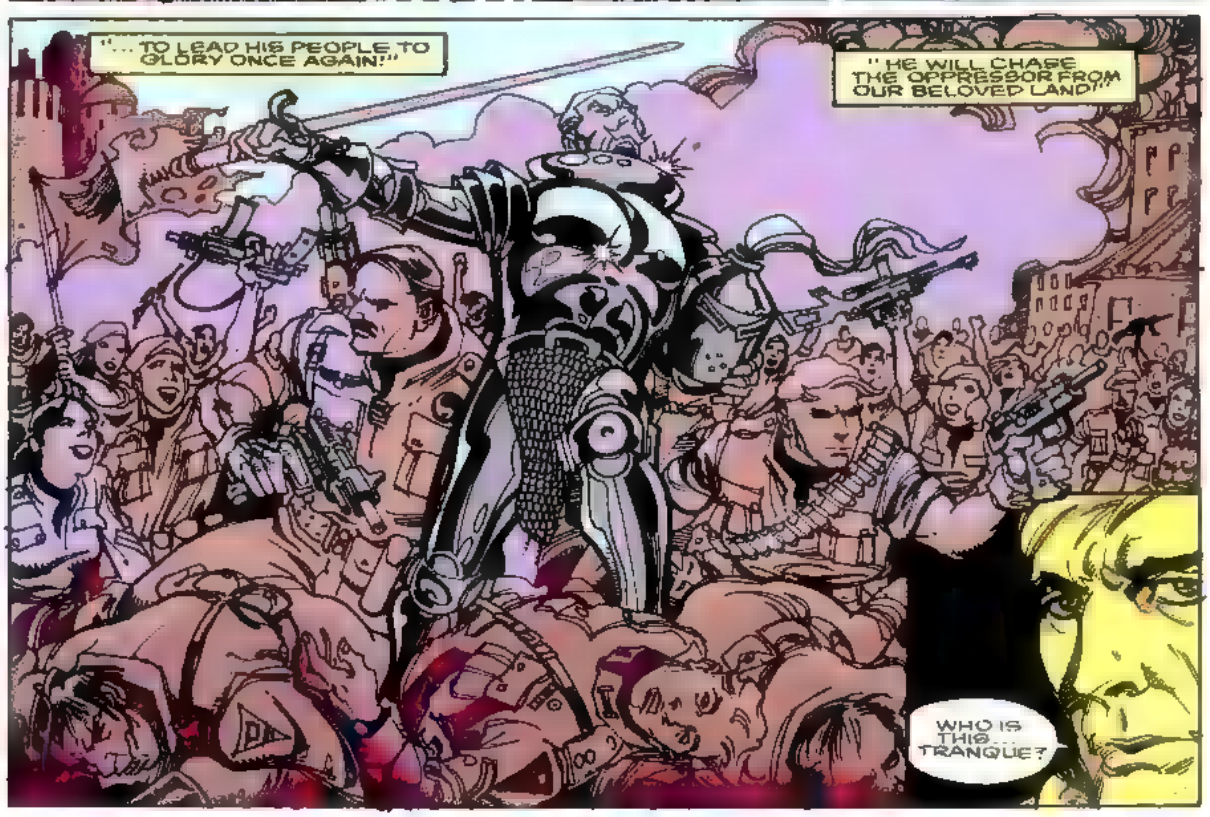

THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE!
I REFUSE TO BELIEVE THIS!
DR. DOOM'S
RUMORS OF WAR
ERNIE COLÓN
STORY & ART
JANICE CHIANG
LETTERER
MIKE THOMAS
COLORIST
JOEY CAVALIERI
EDITOR
BOBBIE CHASE
CHIEF

I AM LOVED BY MY PEOPLE! LOVED! DO YOU HEAR?
I DID NOT MEAN TO SUGGEST OTHERWISE...
BUT MY INTELLIGENCE REPORTS FROM THE FIELD...
...THAT THOSE AMONG THE ZEFIRO GYPSIES SPEAK OF A LIBERATOR... ONE WHO WILL COME TO DELIVER THEM TO A GOLDEN AGE...
...ONE FREE OF [redacted] PERSECUTION!
THEIR FREEDOM HAS BEEN THREATENED CONSTANTLY BY THE INFLUX OF STRANGERS... CRIMINALS AND MISCREANTS WHO WERE BROUGHT IN BY TIGER WYLDE. THEY--
I AM WELL AWARE OF THE TRIALS OF THE ZEFIRO.
"THEIR FREEDOM" [redacted] MINE TO GRANT. IF IT IS FREEDOM FROM ME THEY WISH...
...THEN SOMEONE WILL PAY.


I CANNOT LEAVE THIS MATTER TO THE DIVINATIONS OF FORTUNE.
I MUST SEE TO IT MYSELF.
THIS DEVICE WILL CLOAK ME...
...FOR A BRIEF PERIOD...
...ALLOWING ME TO PASS AMONGST THE ZEFIRO CLAN AS BROTHER AND TRIBESMAN
I WILL GAIN MY OWN INTELLIGENCE... FIRSTHAND!


AH! THE AROMA OF FOOD COOKED OVER AN OPEN FIRE! THE LULLING STRAINS OF MUSIC PLAYED UNDER THE STARS!
HERE... I WILL GAIN THEIR TRUST.
HERE... I WILL BE WELCOME.
BROTHERS...CAN YOU SPARE FOOD AND COMPANY FOR A WEARY TRAVELER?
WE'RE ONLY TOO GLAD TO ADD TO OUR RANKS.
THESE ARE HARD TIMES FOR ZEFIRO... BUT YOU CAN MAKE THIS YOUR HOME.
THERE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN HARD TIMES FOR ZEFIRO.
NOT LIKE NOW.
FACTIONS WITHIN OUR OWN LATVERIAN ARMY THREATEN US.
AN AMBITIOUS GENERAL SEES US AS CLINGING TO THE OLD WAYS. HE CANNOT WIN OUR LOYALTY, SO HE PREFERS TO OPPRESS US.

BUT I TELL YOU, A NEW DAWN FOR US IS RISING.
A NEW LIBERATOR WILL BRING US TO SALVATION.
WE HAVE A CHAMPION IN TRANQUE THE TERRIBLE.
THE RUMOR IS THAT HE HAS RISEN FROM HIS CRYPT...

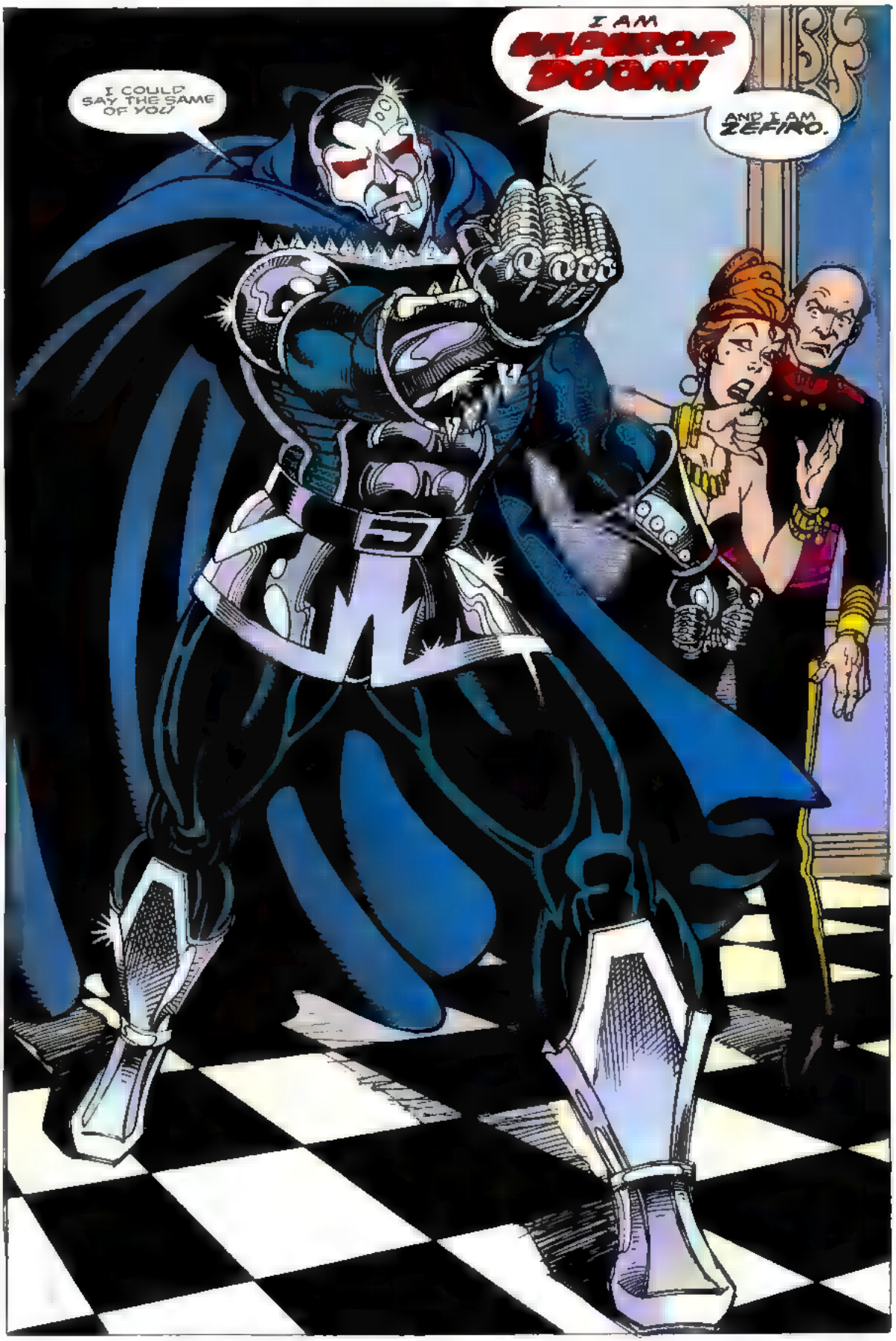

"... TO LEAD HIS PEOPLE TO GLORY ONCE AGAIN!"
"HE WILL CHASE THE OPPRESSOR FROM OUR BELOVED LAND!"
WHO IS THIS... TRANQUE?

HOW CAN YOU BE OF ZEFIRO BLOOD AND NOT KNOW OF TRANQUE THE TERRIBLE?
IT WAS HE WHO routed THE THIEVES FROM THE COURT OF THE EMPEROR ROPO SOME NINETY-NINE YEARS AGO!
AND IT WILL BE HE WHO COUNTERS THIS NEW THREAT FROM GENERAL VERBRAGGE!
VERBRAGGE?
IF WE ZEFIRO CLING TO OUR WAYS OF MAGIC... OUR TIGHT-KNIT BONDS... OUR CULTURE... HIS RISE TO POWER IN LATVERIA IS *HALTED*.
HE MUST CRUSH THE ZEFIRO TO SUCCEED.
BUT WE WILL DISCUSS THIS MORE IN THE MORNING. THE HOUR GROWS LATE.

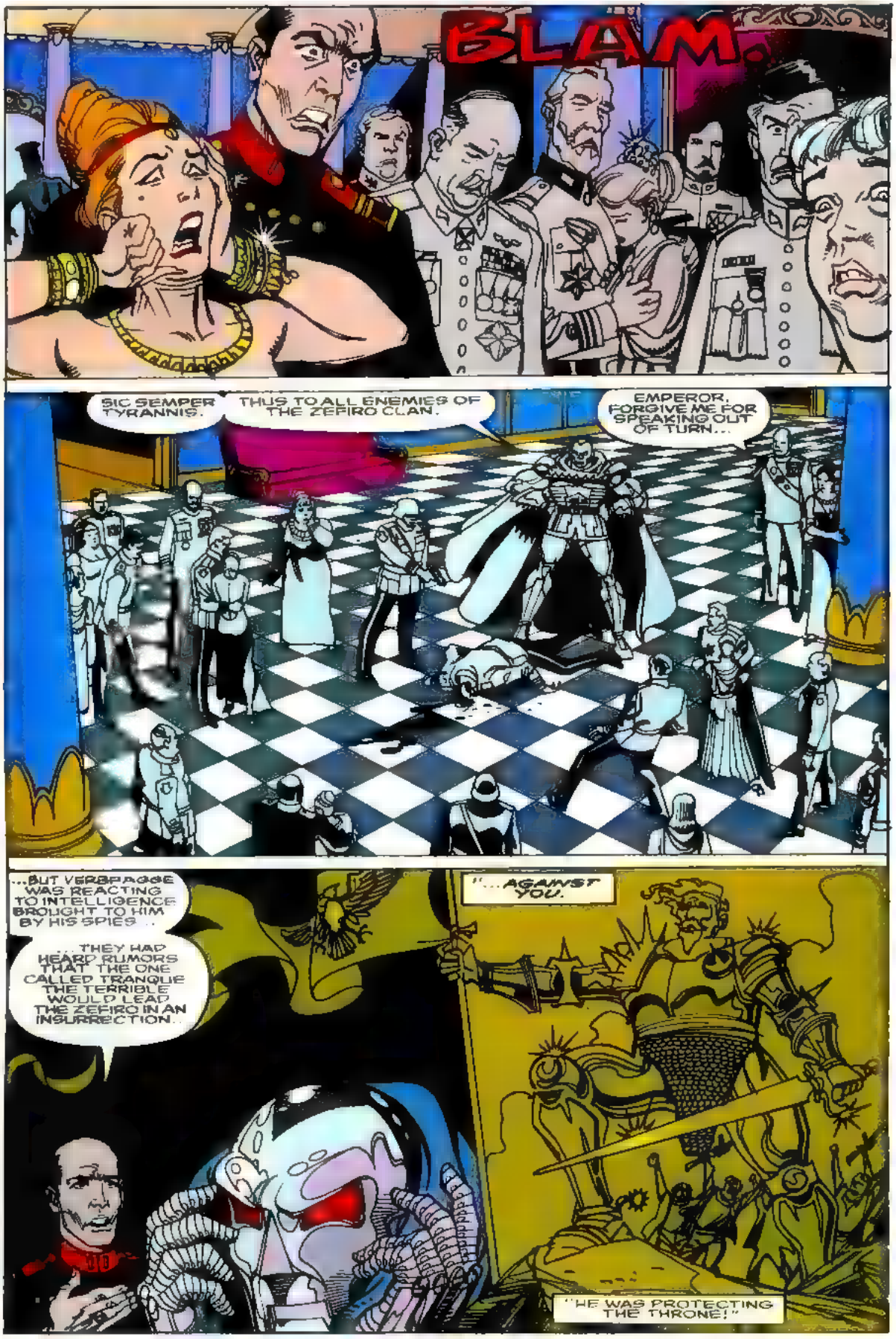
IN THE MORNING I WILL NO LONGER HAVE THEIR CONFIDENCE. SINCE THIS FACADE WILL FADE
ARE YOU THERE?
I HEAR AND OBEY, YOUR GRACE.
CHECK THE MAUSOLEUM BEHIND CASTLE DOOM.
I REALIZE THIS WILL SOUND ODD, BUT I WANT YOU TO INSPECT THE CRYPT OF TRANQUE THE TERRIBLE.
YOUR PURPOSE IS MINE, EMPEROR

THERE ARE NO REMAINS... AND THE ARMOR ABOVE THE CRYPT IS GONE.
CAN IT BE AS I HAVE FEARED?
IS ZEFIRO MAGIC AT WURK HERE?
ZEFIRO GYPSIES... KILLED TO SET AN EXAMPLE TO THE REST OF THEIR WOEBEGONE TRIBE!
THIS MAN VERBRAGGE IS A TRAITOR TO THE LATVERIAN PEOPLE... AND MUST BE PUT DOWN AT ONCE!
WHERE CAN I FIND GENERAL VERBRAGGE?
WHO WANTS TO KNOW, YOU [redacted] LOOKING GYPSY?
SORRY?
WHO'S SORRY NOW?
HEY!
WE TOOK CARE OF THOSE OTHER GYPSY SLOBS... AND WE'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU!

IF YOU'VE SPILLED ZEFIRO BLOOD..
...I WILL DO SOME BLOOD SPILLING OF MY OWN
AH. I SEE YOU ARE MORE WILLING NOW TO POINT ME IN THE DIRECTION OF VERBRAGGE...WITH BROKEN FINGERS!
THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND COUNSEL... GENTLEMEN.
VERBRAGGE!
FACE ME!
YOU WILL PAY FOR YOUR CRIMES AGAINST THE ZEFIRO!
INDEED?
AND WHO MIGHT YOU BE?
SOME GARLIC-EATING, MOTH-INFESTED ZEFIRO PAUPER?
YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT AUTHORITY YOU CONFRONT!

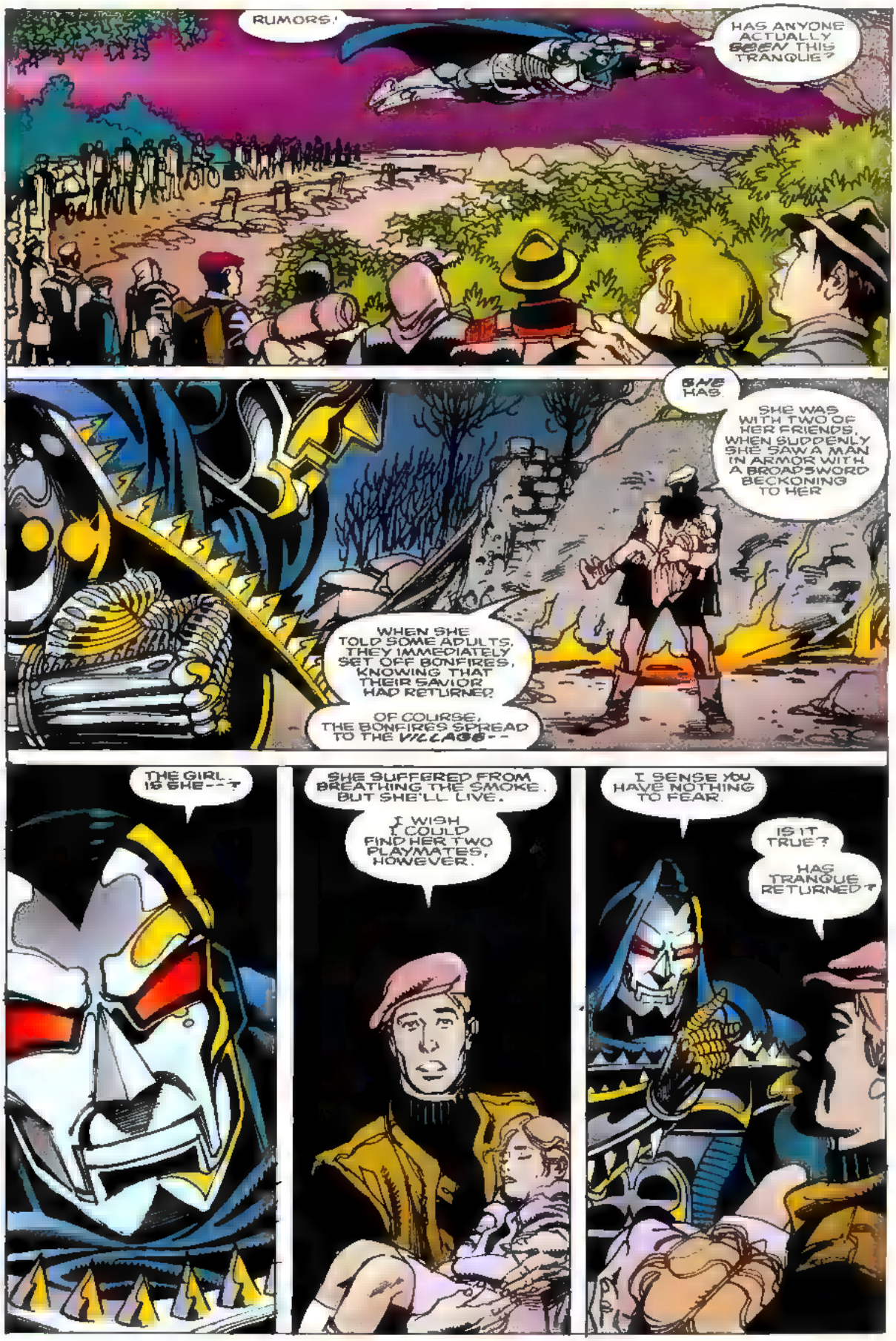

I AM EMPEROR DOOM!
AND I AM ZEFIRO.
I COULD SAY THE SAME OF YOU!

ZEFIRO GYPSY BLOOD COURSES THROUGH MY VEINS.
WHAT SORT OF BLOOD IS IN YOURS?
TELL YOU WHAT. LET'S SEE IT.
THAT'S AN ORDER
BUT...BUT... I AM LOYAL!
MY RECORD SPEAKS FOR ITSELF!
SO DOES A PISTOL, VERBRAGGE. ELOQUENTLY.

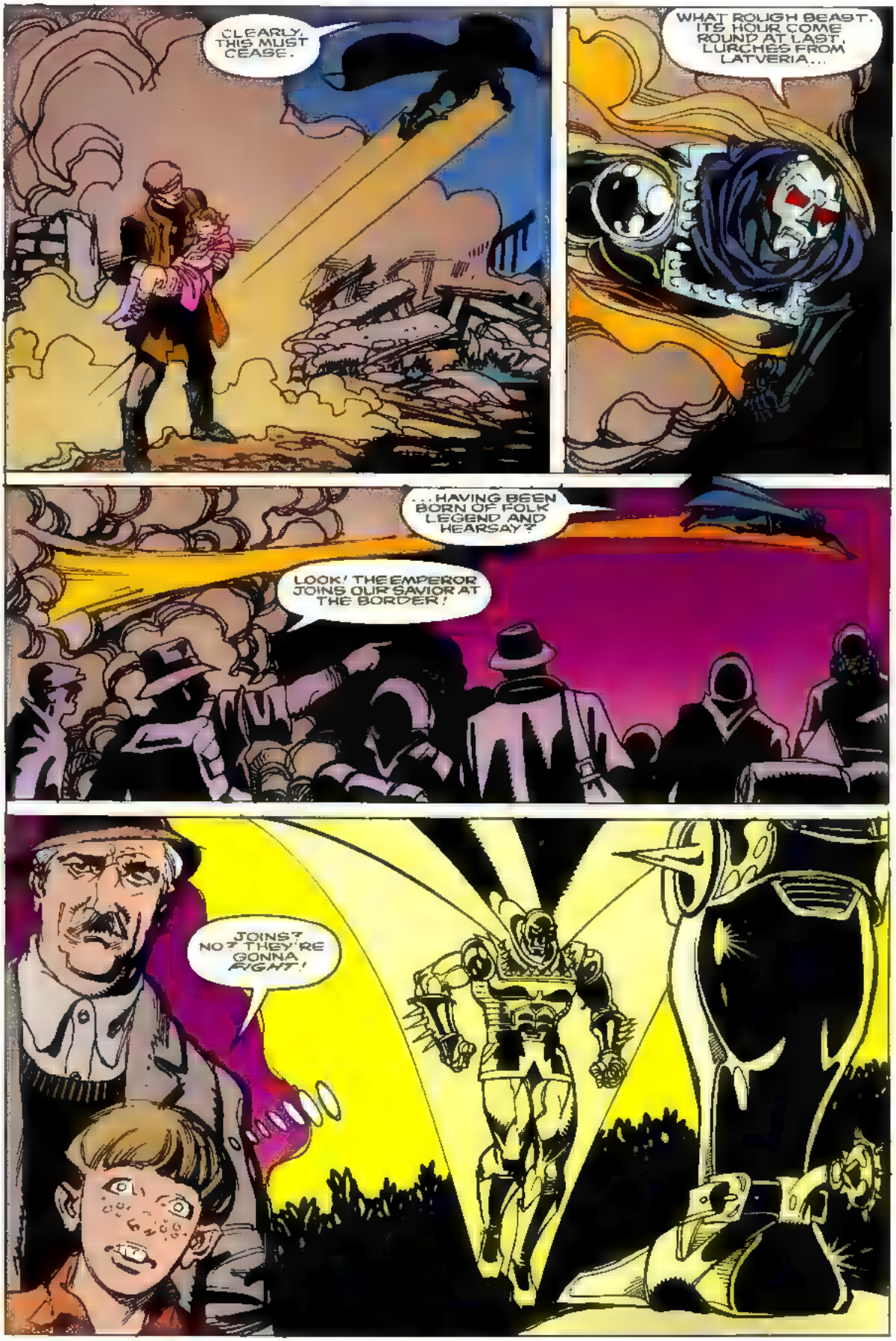

BLAM.
SIC SEMPER TYRANNIS.
THUS TO ALL ENEMIES OF THE ZEFIRO CLAN.
EMPEROR, FORGIVE ME FOR SPEAKING OUT OF TURN...
...BUT VERBRAGGE WAS REACTING TO INTELLIGENCE BROUGHT TO HIM BY HIS SPIES...
...THEY HAD HEARD RUMORS THAT THE ONE CALLED TRANQUIL THE TERRIBLE WOULD LEAD THE ZEFIRO IN AN INSURRECTION...
"...AGAINST YOU.
"HE WAS PROTECTING THE THRONE!"

THE DAY I NEED PROTECTION BY WEASELS LIKE VERBRAGGE WILL BE A SAD DAY FOR LATVERIA INDEED.
STILL...
THESE RUMORS GROW OUT OF HAND.
AGAIN, I WILL SEE THEIR BASIS FOR MYSELF.
WHAT NOW?
GREAT EMPEROR!
THE DAY OF OUR SALVATION IS AT HAND!

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO YOUR VILLAGE?
IT IS IN ASHES!
IT IS A JOY TO BEHOLD! A SMALL SACRIFICE, IF IT EARNS OUR FREEDOM FOREVER!
I WILL DECIDE WHO'S FREE AROUND HERE.
THE RUMORS FROM THE FRONT BRING US THE GREAT TIDINGS!
TRANQUE THE TERRIBLE HAS RETURNED TO US AT LAST!
"EVEN NOW, HE IS REPELLING OUR ENEMIES THAT OVERWHELM OUR BORDERS...AND DEFEATING VERBRAGGE'S FACTION IN THE LATVERIAN ARMY!"

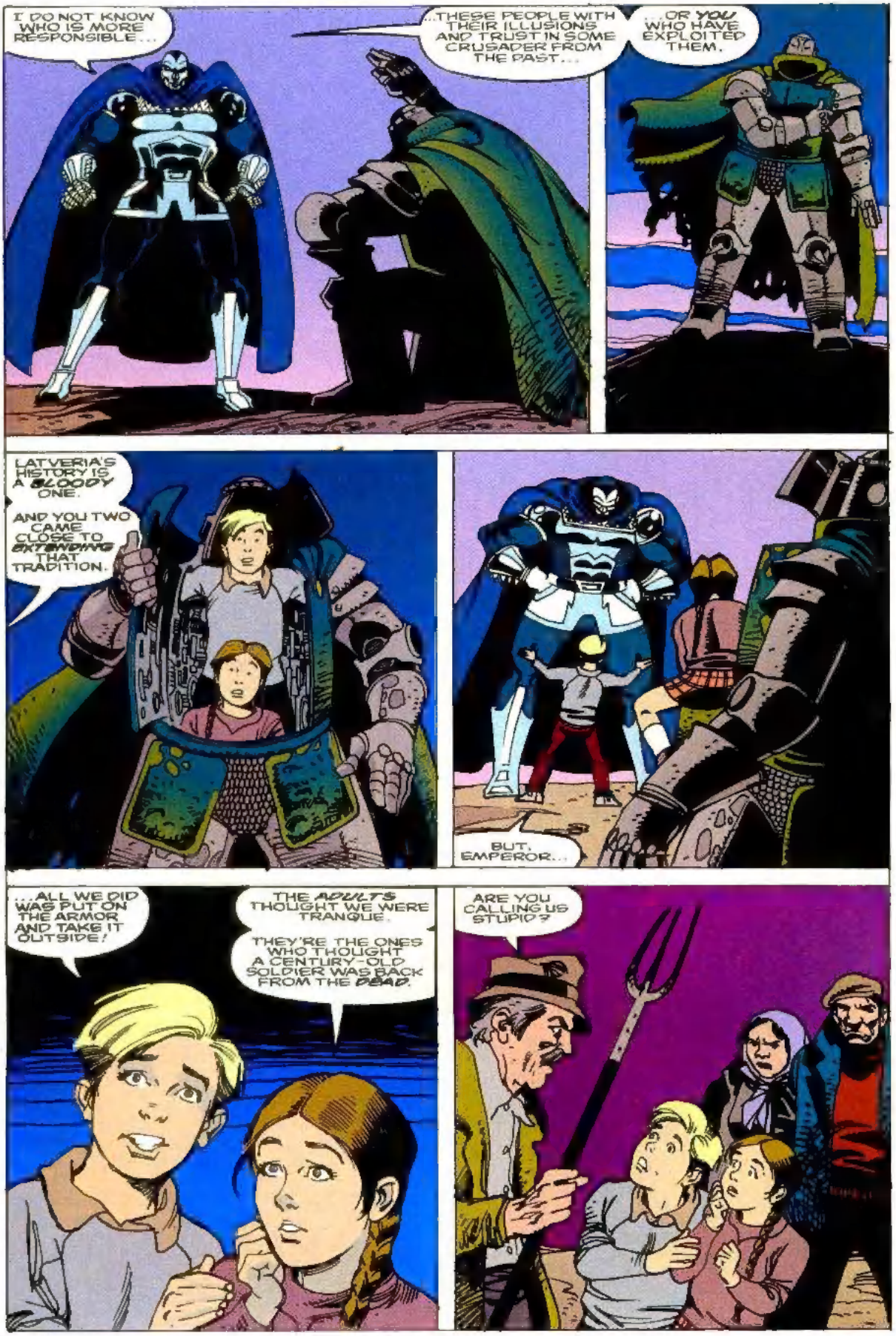

RUMORS!
HAS ANYONE ACTUALLY SEEN THIS TRANQUE?
SHE HAS.
SHE WAS WITH TWO OF HER FRIENDS, WHEN SUDDENLY SHE SAW A MAN IN ARMOR WITH A BROADSWORD BECKONING TO HER
WHEN SHE TOLD SOME ADULTS, THEY IMMEDIATELY SET OFF BONFIRES, KNOWING THAT THEIR SAVIOR HAD RETURNED!
OF COURSE, THE BONFIRES SPREAD TO THE VILLAGE--
THE GIRL... IS SHE--?
SHE SUFFERED FROM BREATHING THE SMOKE. BUT SHE'LL LIVE.
I WISH I COULD FIND HER TWO PLAYMATES, HOWEVER.
I SENSE YOU HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR.
IS IT TRUE? HAS TRANQUE RETURNED?

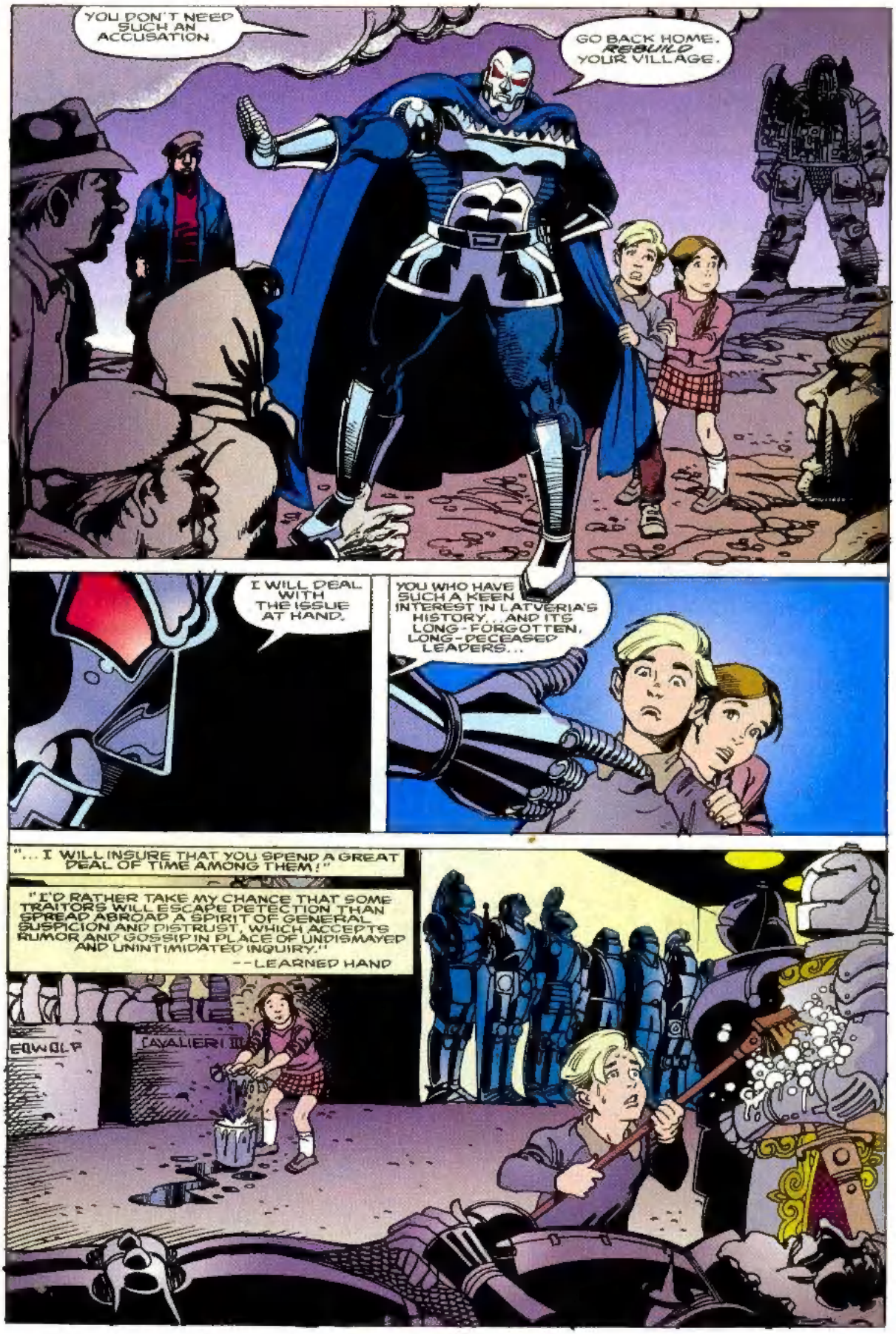
"CAN LATVERIA AFFORD TO HAVE A SELF-APPOINTED CRUSADER"
"...PROVOKING WAR AT OUR WELL-GUARDED, WELL-NEGOTIATED BORDERS?"


CLEARLY, THIS MUST CEASE.
WHAT ROUGH BEAST. ITS HOUR COME ROUND AT LAST, LURCHES FROM LATVERIA...
...HAVING BEEN BORN OF FOLK LEGEND AND HEARSAY?
LOOK! THE EMPEROR JOINS OUR SAVIOR AT THE BORDER!
JOINS? NO? THEY'RE GONNA FIGHT!

AND DOOM WILL TEAR APART HIS FOE WITH ONE BLAST!
WAIT'LL I TELL EVERYONE!

SO THIS IS THE SAVIOR OF THE LATVERIAN PEOPLE--
--HEADED FOR THE BORDER WITH AN ARMY OF PEASANTS ARMED WITH PITCHFORKS!
EVEN IN THE FIRST HEROIC AGE, THIS BATTLE WOULD BE SEEN FOR WHAT IT IS... A LOST CAUSE!
BUT INNUENDO AND GOSSIP HAVE BUILT IT INTO MORE THAN THAT!
THIS HAS GONE FAR ENOUGH!
PLEASE! WE MEANT NO HARM!
THAT IS WHY YOU HAVE DONE SO MUCH OF IT!


I DO NOT KNOW WHO IS MORE RESPONSIBLE...
...THESE PEOPLE WITH THEIR ILLUSIONS AND TRUST IN SOME CRUSADER FROM THE PAST...
...OR YOU WHO HAVE EXPLOITED THEM.
LATVERIA'S HISTORY IS A BLOODY ONE.
AND YOU TWO CAME CLOSE TO EXTINGUISHING THAT TRADITION.
BUT, EMPEROR...
...ALL WE DID WAS PUT ON THE ARMOR AND TAKE IT OUTSIDE!
THE ADULTS THOUGHT WE WERE TRANQUE.
THEY'RE THE ONES WHO THOUGHT A CENTURY-OLD SOLDIER WAS BACK FROM THE DEAD.
ARE YOU CALLING US STUPID?


YOU DON'T NEED SUCH AN ACCUSATION.
GO BACK HOME. REBUILD YOUR VILLAGE.
I WILL DEAL WITH THE ISSUE AT HAND.
YOU WHO HAVE SUCH A KEEN INTEREST IN LATVERIA'S HISTORY...AND IT'S LONG-FORGOTTEN, LONG-DECEASED LEADERS...
"...I WILL INSURE THAT YOU SPEND A GREAT DEAL OF TIME AMONG THEM!"
"I'D RATHER TAKE MY CHANCE THAT SOME TRAITORS WILL ESCAPE DETECTION THAN SPREAD ABROAD A SPIRIT OF GENERAL SUSPICION AND DISTRUST, WHICH ACCEPTS RUMOR AND GOSSIP IN PLACE OF UNDISMAYED AND UNINTIMIDATED INQUIRY."
--LEARNED HAND
EQWOLP
CAVALIER!

UNLIMITED

JOEY CAVALIERI — Editor LIA PELOSI — Assistant Editor

ALL LETTERS FOR PUBLICATION MUST INCLUDE YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS, ALTHOUGH WE WILL GLADLY WITHHOLD THAT INFORMATION UPON REQUEST.

Out Of My Head

You asked for more stories directly connected to the other books in the 2099 line...so here they are.

Pat 'n' Tony gifted us with this solo story of the Public Enemy, a guy who makes Jake Gallows seem sedate and serene.

Next time, our amorphous format changes again, based on your mail for this issue. And speaking of mail, let's get to it, shall we?

Dear Joey & Lia,

Bravo! Marvel has never been a stranger to innovative storytelling, but 2099 UNLIMITED #7 seems to have broken new ground. "Opening Night" was impressive, to say the least. I'm no Shakespearean scholar but this truly original, vastly entertaining tale seems to have its roots firmly embedded in Stan Lee's only true rival. Dan Slott and Rebecca Guay are unfamiliar to me. I hope they're newcomers so they can stay around longer.

As if one great story wasn't enough, you threw in another. "Metalscream," a good old-fashioned mindboggler, left me panting for air. D'Israeli did a brilliant job interpreting Warren Ellis's imaginative script. After twenty pages of more non-stop groundbreaking, never have the words "to be continued" been so well received.

I echo Jonathan Tuzman's sentiments concerning SPIDER-MAN 2099 ANNUAL #1. Not much has been said about this underrated little gem. Too bad. To be blunt, it's one of the best comics I've ever read. Ever.

Steve Perram
2920 Meridian St.
Bellingham, WA 98225

In return for your kind words, Steve, we've asked Dan and Rebecca to do a sequel just for you. (Okay, so it's not *just* for you, but they're still doing it!)

Dear UNLIMITED,

What can I possibly say to express the utter joy I get when I read your comics? Your vision of the future is a dark, grim, moody cyberpunk fantasy (or nightmare) given life. I revel in it but what I really love are the characters themselves and the ways that they interact with their world in a manner consistent with their personalities. That's what Marvel's all about, no?

What new characters are you going to create? What old characters will you bring up next? You've already brought the Hulk and Thor (yeah, why not see him or the rest of the entire Norse pantheon again? We'd love that!). Why not some of the other Avengers? I can see a Henry Pym resurfacing as any number of type of characters given his shrinking power: a corporate spy, a private eye, a researcher, privateer/troubleshooter for an independent corporation. And how about Stark-Fujikawa? I can really see the concept of an ironclad samurai flying around. We've already seen S.I.E.G.E. and Galahad 2099, so why not another Iron Man? Then we might just see the resurfacing of an Avengers 2099!

Which isn't to say you shouldn't develop new characters. R-Gang was really fun, and I miss them. Bring 'em back! I loved issue #4; Metalscream with D'Israeli was unbelievably cool. I liked the sidekick too. We can see how she begins to slowly learn magic. Lachryma was just a doll of a character, great story, great atmosphere. Why not see more women in 2099 with a full range of powers and personalities?

Yeah, there are a lot of areas you can still develop in 2099. The indys are just ripe for exploration, as are the minicorps; they invent new tricks every day that might prove more of a problem than the megacorps choose to admit. We could watch a megacorp in the making or perhaps, even more thrilling, a megacorp going down! That'd be a major event in all the characters' lives. Magic can always be explored further; a Dr. Strange to add to our list of remade Silver Age characters.

Charles Choi
142-37 59th Ave.
Flushing, NY 11355

A certain 2099 mystic may be appearing sooner than you think, as well as return appearances by some of the features you admired.

Dear Joey,

In X-MEN 2099 you asked for ideas for new 2099 titles. I suggest Black Panther 2099 and Iron Man 2099.

My desire to see a Black Panther 2099 stems from the current Xandra in the Wakanda 2099 subplot in DOOM 2099. It's just screaming for this magazine.

Until recently I've been skeptical about the idea of an Iron Man 2099, but after seeing Stark-Fujikawa playing a small role in SPIDER-MAN 2099, I've been growing more curious about this. In particular, the recent Galahad 2099 story in UNLIMITED #6 convinced me that Iron Man has a place here. Even though the Galahad story was a little goofy, Galahad 2099 would make an excellent predecessor for an Iron Man 2099 book.

Getting off the subject: How about an off-world story in 2099 UNLIMITED?

Forrest Trimbell
(Address withheld by request)

How about an off-world story in PUNISHER 2099 #25 instead?

Dear Joey & Lia,

It's not going to work. Your subtle little ploy to feed our minds subliminal information has not gone unnoticed. If there indeed is going to be a Kang 2099, I couldn't be happier! The last frame on page 26 of 2099 UNLIMITED #7 was hardly subtle. I'm not so sure those last two sentences were spoken by Tyler Stone, but by some enterprising Marvel editor.

Of course, this may just be a ruse, but I hope that's not true. If Kang does appear in 2099, how do you keep him there? He is, after all, a time traveler. So until later, kudos on an extremely well-crafted future Marvelverse!

Matt Skully
(Address withheld by request)

Now, Matt, do you really think we'd be *that* sneaky? Hee, hee, hee...

Dear 2099 folks,

What a great job you guys are doing! I have every issue of every 2099 book so far!

As other fans of 2099 have stated, you should consider using one-shots and mini-series. I'd like to see more of Lachryma. I don't know my opinion on Metalscream. He has the potential to be cool, but I don't really care for the art or lettering. If you're going to keep him as a semi-occasional character, maybe you could let some other artists try him. I also agree 2099 UNLIMITED should be monthly, more like a 2099 Spotlight or 2099 Premiere like Marvel had in the 70's. If you continued to add more characters, maybe a few Marvel 2099 team-ups would be cool.

Mark Trollinger
380 Old Concord Rd., Apt. 301B
Smyrna, GA 30082

Any seconds on the notions of one-shots or mini-series? Actually, Mark, a one-shot 48-page book is in the talking stages right now. Watch our editorials for more details!

NEXT ISSUE

Let's see here, whadda we got? A bunch of new stuff is in the works; it's just a question of what gets finished first. There's that Galahad 2099 sequel we did 'cause you guys liked the first one so much. Spider-Man 2099'll be here...and another surprise feature or two. It'll be as big and as cool as this issue, so how's that for a recommendation?